

Printing Letters Correctly

The 'ball and stick' method of teaching beginners to print has been proven to be the best. Letters formed this way are easier for small children to print, and this print is similar to the print they will see in beginner reading books. The ball is started at the top center, and is drawn to the left (counter-clockwise). The stick is drawn from the top on a line down to a line.

As children's writing matures, they will begin to make letters such as 'a' and 'd' without lifting the pencil. I have given you both methods for these letters.

Young children need guide lines for printing, or it will wobble all over the page. The inter-lined paper is best - this has a dotted line between the solid lines. Some teachers talk about a house - where letters stand on the floor and have their heads touch the ceilings. Some letters live downstairs, some are tall and need both the downstairs and upstairs, and some have 'tails' that go into the basement.

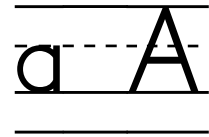
When they are printing words, the letters should be almost touching each other in the word, and then room for a 'finger-space' between words.

Learning to print correctly is important. Letters should always be formed from the top down, and touch the lines.



For the **lower case a**, the children begin at the top of the ball and go to the left to make a circle. The pencil is then lifted and the straight line is made from top to bottom just touching the ball. Tell the children to begin by putting the pencil on the dots.

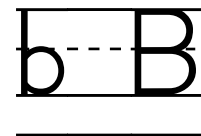
For the **upper case A**, the tall line on the left is made first, beginning at the top, the tall right line is the second step, also beginning at the top, and the horizontal line is last, drawn from left to right on the dotted line.



More mature students will make the **lower case a** by starting the circle below the line, circling to the left touching the dotted line and the base line and then coming straight up to the dotted line and then making the straight line down over the up-stroke without taking the pencil point off the paper. The ball must be closed.

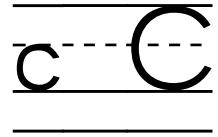
To form the **lower case b**, first draw the vertical line, top to bottom. Then lift the pencil and put the pencil point on the dots where the top of the circle will be, and draw the circle, left to right. A 'bat and a ball.'

To form the **upper case B**, make the vertical line first and then put the pencil point at the top of the vertical line again. Make the round top, joining the vertical line at the dots and then again at the floor.



More mature students will make the **lower case b** by starting at the top of the vertical line and drawing it to the base and then stop - reverse as the line goes up following the first and then going right over the top to make the ball by touching the dotted line and then around to the base and close to the vertical line.

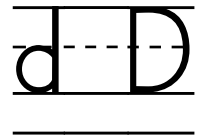
Lower case c begins below the line and then the line touches the top, makes part of a ball (or oval if you wish), touches the floor and up slightly.



Upper case C is formed the same way as the lower case.

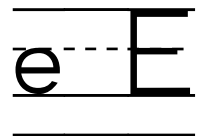
The **lower case d** is made in the same way as an 'a' with a tall vertical line made from the top down.

To make the **upper case D** the vertical line is drawn first top to bottom, then the pencil is placed back on the starting point and the curve is drawn to the floor.



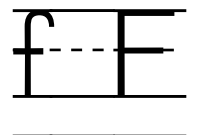
More mature students will make the **lower case d** by starting the circle below the line, circling to the left touching the dotted line and the base line and then coming straight up to the top line and then making the straight line down over the up-stroke without taking the pencil point off the paper. The ball must be closed.

The **lower case e** begins with a straight line in the center of the space, left to right, stop - then around the circle touching the dotted line, the beginning point and the floor.



The **upper case E** begins with the vertical line, top to bottom. The horizontal lines are made top to bottom and left to right.

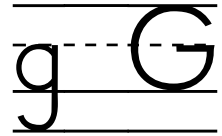
The **lower case f** begins below the line, and it touches the top line. The stem is a straight line. The cross stroke is made left to right.



The **upper case F** begins with the vertical straight line, top to bottom, the top horizontal line is made next, and then the center horizontal line, both made left to right.

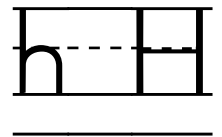
To form the **lower case g**, make the ball first, beginning at the top and drawing to the left. Then make the vertical line beginning at the dots, down to the line below and curving upwards.

The **upper case G** is like the C with a straight horizontal line inwards on the dotted line, made continuously.



More mature students will make the **lower case g** by starting the circle below the line, circling to the left touching the dotted line and the base line and then coming straight up to the dotted line and then making the straight line down over the up-stroke (as in making the 'a') and going down to the line below and a half-circle to the left without taking the pencil point off the paper. The ball must be closed.

The **lower case h** is made without lifting the pencil. Begin at the top to make the vertical line, stop at the floor, back up the vertical line to round over at the dots and straight down to the base line.



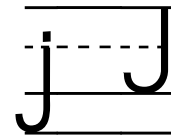
The **upper case H** is formed by making the two vertical lines first, and then connecting them from left to right on the dotted line. (Reverse 2 and 3 in the diagram...)

The **lower case i** is simple, one short straight line drawn from the dotted line downwards. The dot is just that, a tiny pencil mark in the center of the space, directly above the line.



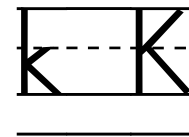
The **upper case I** is a straight line drawn from the top downwards. Have the children put two tiny lines (left to right) at the top and bottom of the vertical line.

The **lower case j** is formed as the i. Make a vertical line beginning at the dots, down through the floor and curl to the left at the dotted line below. Make a tiny dot above.



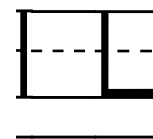
The **upper case J** begins at the top.

To form the **lower case k**, first make the vertical line from top to bottom, then the upper diagonal begins at the dots and goes to the vertical line. Then last is the lower diagonal, both from the highest end of the line to the lowest.



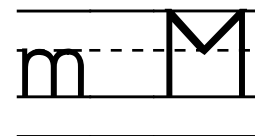
The **upper case K** is formed in the same way, with three separate lines all drawn from top to bottom.

The **lower case l** is simply a straight line drawn from top to bottom.



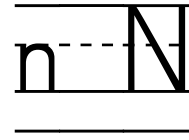
The **upper case L** begins at the top and is made with one continuous line, vertical and horizontal.

The **lower case M** is made without lifting the pencil point. It begins at the dotted line, goes down and back up the same line and then around at the top. The line then goes straight down to the floor, back up the same line and over touching the dotted line and then straight down.



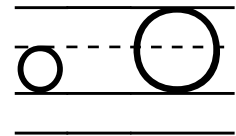
The **upper case M** begins at the top of the left vertical line and it is drawn to the floor. Lift the pencil and place the point at the top of this line and then the rest is drawn without lifting the pencil, using straight lines.

The **lower case n** is formed by beginning at the dots, drawing a vertical line to the floor, back up this line, over the curve and a vertical line back to the floor.



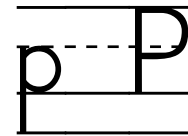
With the **upper case N** is drawn in three parts. The left vertical line is first drawn top to bottom, then the pencil point is placed at the top of this line and the diagonal line is drawn top to bottom and then the second vertical line top to bottom.

The **lower case o** begins at the dotted line and circles to the left, touching the bottom line and closing carefully at the top,



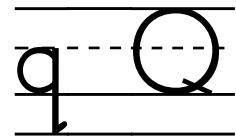
The **upper case O** is made as the lower case o.

To form **the lower case p**, make the vertical line first beginning at the dots. Then put the pencil point on the dots at the top of the circle, and draw the circle to the left.



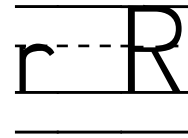
To form **the upper case P**, draw the vertical line first, top to bottom, and then draw the rounded line beginning at the top again.

The **lower case q** begins with a circle, beginning at the top and drawn from left to right. Begin the vertical line at the dots, just touching the circle. Curve the line to the right at the dots below.



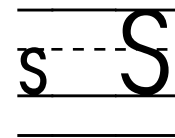
To make the **upper case Q** make an upper case O and then a small line crossing it.

The **lower case r** begins with a straight line drawn from the dots to the floor, back up the vertical line and a curve over touching the dots at the top of the curve,



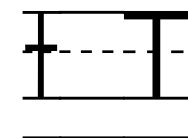
To make the **upper case R** first the vertical line is drawn top to bottom. The pencil is lifted and the point goes to the original starting point to make the curve, into the vertical line at the dots and then angles to the floor.

For the **lower case s**, begin just below the dotted line, curve up to touch the line, around and down to touch the bottom line, around and up slightly.



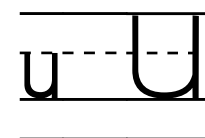
The **upper case S** is formed in exactly the same way. To help the children learn to form the S, you can make a large S on the ground outside or the playground cement with chalk and have the children walk the S path. Make it large in the air with arm motions to show smooth curves. Use tactile surfaces to practice the pattern.

To form the **lower case t**, draw the vertical line beginning from the top and then the horizontal line from left to right on the dotted center line.



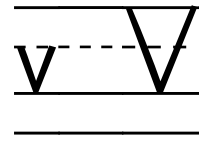
The **upper case T** is formed the same way, with the horizontal line at the top.

To make the **lower case u** begin at the dots, make a curve that touches the floor, touch the dotted line again and then make a straight vertical line back to the floor, without lifting the pencil.



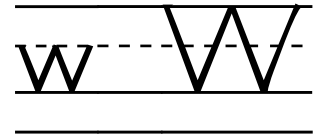
Make the **upper case U** as the lower case.

The **lower case v** begins with a straight angled line drawn from the dots to the floor, and then angled back to the dotted line, without lifting the pencil.



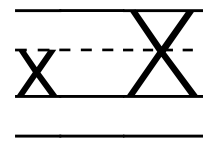
The **upper case V** begins at the left top and is made with two straight lines without lifting the pencil.

The **lower case w** is made without lifting the pencil, and drawn with straight lines from left to right touching the lines at the end of each stroke.



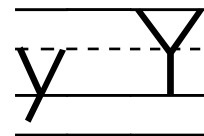
The **upper case W** is made as the lower case.

The **lower case x** begins with a straight angled line drawn from the dots to the floor. The second stroke is also top to bottom.



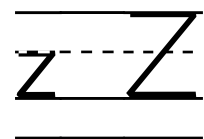
Make the **upper case X** as the lower case.

The **lower case y** begins with a straight angled line drawn from the dots to the floor. Then begin again at the dots and angle the line through the floor to the dots below touching the end of the first line.



To make the **upper case Y** make two separate angled lines to form a v in the upper space. Lift the pencil again and then draw a vertical line from the bottom of the v to the floor.

The **lower case z** begins at the top by a left to right horizontal line. The letter is made without lifting the pencil and all lines are straight.



The **upper case Z** is made as the lower case.